

Remarks

Claims 21-30 are pending. Claims 24 and 25 have been withdrawn pursuant to an election of species. Applicants affirm their election to prosecute the invention as exemplified by species Irganox 1222 (diethyl-3,5-di-tert-butyl-4-hydroxybenzylphosphonate, Example A1, p. 64).

The Examiner rejects claims 21-23 and 26-30 under 35 U.S.C. 103 as being unpatentable over U.S. Pat. No. 4,446,086 ("Molenaar et al.") and published European patent application 719,824 ("EP '824") in view of published British patent 1,358,637 ("GB '637") and published PCT application WO 94/29377 ("WO '377"). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

The Examiner argues that Molenaar and EP '824 disclose a dust-free granular blend including epoxidized oils prepared by extrusion through a thin perforated die. Claim 21 requires the presence of at least one bisphenol A diglycidyl ether that is solid at room temperature. The Examiner acknowledges that the prior art does not disclose this feature. The Examiner asserts that GB '637 and WO '377 disclose the use of bisphenol A diglycidyl ether as part of their stabilizer systems. Hence, the Examiner alleges that it would have been obvious to use a bis-A DGE in the stabilizer systems described in Molenaar and EP '824.

GB '637 describes systems containing Bis-A having an epoxy equivalent of 180 to 195. Applicants enclose a technical list for various grades of Bis-A. The top line indicates that Bis-A having an epoxy equivalent weight of 180-194 has a measurable viscosity at 25°C. In other words, it is a liquid resin form. The Bis-A epoxy noted by the Examiner in WO '377 is Araldit MY 790. MY 790 is a liquid Bis-A DGE. See U.S. Pat. No. 6,077,891, column 3, line 42. The secondary references cited by the Examiner do not provide any motivation to use a Bis-A that is solid at room temperature. Applicants request that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw his obviousness rejection of the pending claims in view of Molenaar and EP '824 in view of GB '637 and WO '377.

Applicants submit that the present application is now in condition for allowance. In the event that minor amendments will further prosecution, Applicants request that the Examiner contact the undersigned representative.

Respectfully submitted,



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Encl.: U.S. Pat. No. 6,077,891 and Technical Data Sheet for Epoxy Resins.